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# An Image is Worth 16 x 16 Words:

## Transformers for Image Classification at Scale

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**Google Brain, ICLR 2021**

Presentation by Soham De\*

\* a mere 2nd year UG who is yet to take IML, so please forgive errors

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# Agenda

## → Overview and Results

This will be a rant on why I find this paper interesting

## → A History Lesson

A quick refreshers for pre-requisites

## → Vision Transformer (ViT)

A discussion on the architecture proposed by this paper

## → Discussion

An extended discussion on the implications and shortcomings

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# Overview and Results

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# Overview

“While the Transformer architecture has become the de-facto standard for NLP tasks, its applications to computer vision remain limited. In vision, attention is either applied in conjunction with convolutional networks, or used to replace certain components of convolutional networks while keeping their overall structure in place. We show that this reliance on CNNs is not necessary and a pure transformer applied directly to sequences of image patches can perform very well on image classification tasks. When pre-trained on large amounts of data and transferred to multiple mid-sized or small image recognition benchmarks (ImageNet, CIFAR-100, VTAB, etc.), Vision Transformer (ViT) attains excellent results compared to state-of-the-art CNNs while requiring substantially fewer computational resources to train”

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# Results

“We find that large scale training trumps inductive bias. Our Vision Transformer (ViT) attains excellent results when pre-trained at sufficient scale and transferred to tasks with fewer data points. When pre-trained on the public ImageNet-21k dataset or the in-house JFT-300M dataset, ViT approaches or beats state of the art on multiple image recognition benchmarks. In particular, the best model reaches the accuracy of 88.55% on ImageNet, 90.72% on ImageNet-Real, 94.55% on CIFAR-100, and 77.63% on the VTAB suite of 19 tasks.”

	Ours-JFT (ViT-H/14)	Ours-JFT (ViT-L/16)	Ours-I21K (ViT-L/16)	BiT-L (ResNet152x4)	Noisy Student (EfficientNet-L2)
ImageNet	<b>88.55</b> $\pm$ 0.04	87.76 $\pm$ 0.03	85.30 $\pm$ 0.02	87.54 $\pm$ 0.02	88.4/88.5*
ImageNet Real	<b>90.72</b> $\pm$ 0.05	90.54 $\pm$ 0.03	88.62 $\pm$ 0.05	90.54	90.55
CIFAR-10	<b>99.50</b> $\pm$ 0.06	99.42 $\pm$ 0.03	99.15 $\pm$ 0.03	99.37 $\pm$ 0.06	—
CIFAR-100	<b>94.55</b> $\pm$ 0.04	93.90 $\pm$ 0.05	93.25 $\pm$ 0.05	93.51 $\pm$ 0.08	—
Oxford-IIIT Pets	<b>97.56</b> $\pm$ 0.03	97.32 $\pm$ 0.11	94.67 $\pm$ 0.15	96.62 $\pm$ 0.23	—
Oxford Flowers-102	99.68 $\pm$ 0.02	<b>99.74</b> $\pm$ 0.00	99.61 $\pm$ 0.02	99.63 $\pm$ 0.03	—
VTAB (19 tasks)	<b>77.63</b> $\pm$ 0.23	76.28 $\pm$ 0.46	72.72 $\pm$ 0.21	76.29 $\pm$ 1.70	—
TPUv3-core-days	2.5k	0.68k	0.23k	9.9k	12.3k

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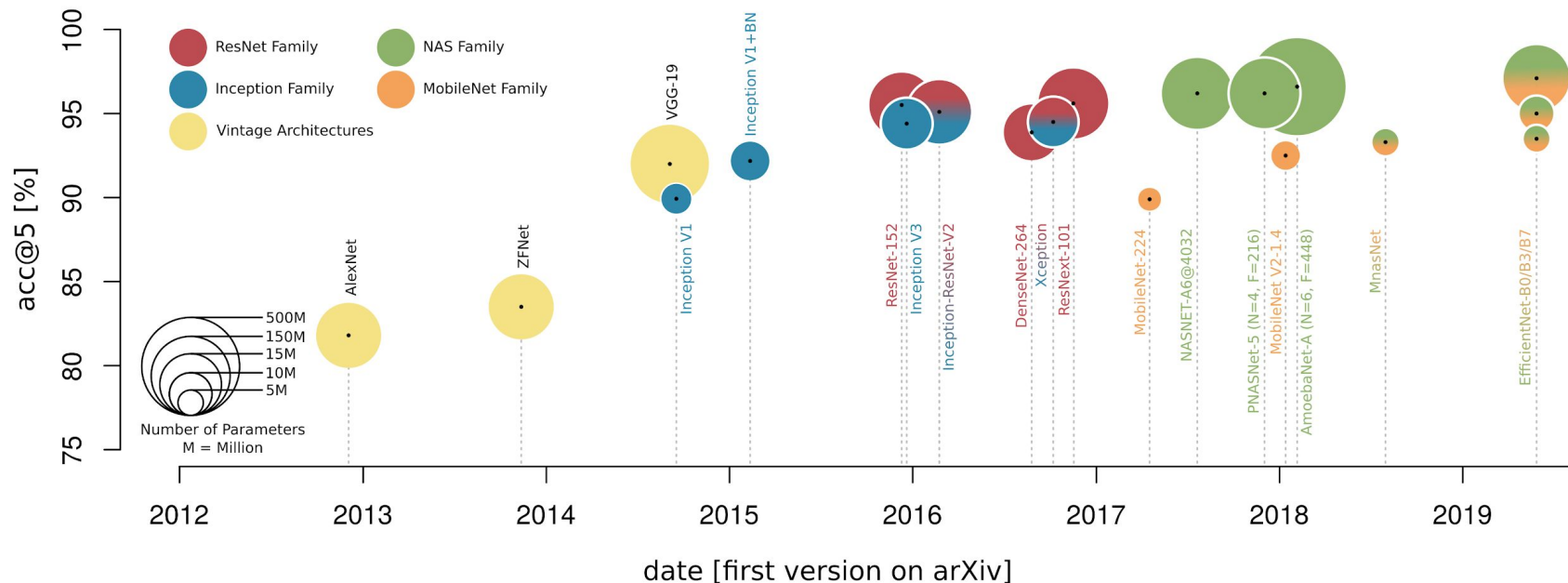
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# A History Lesson

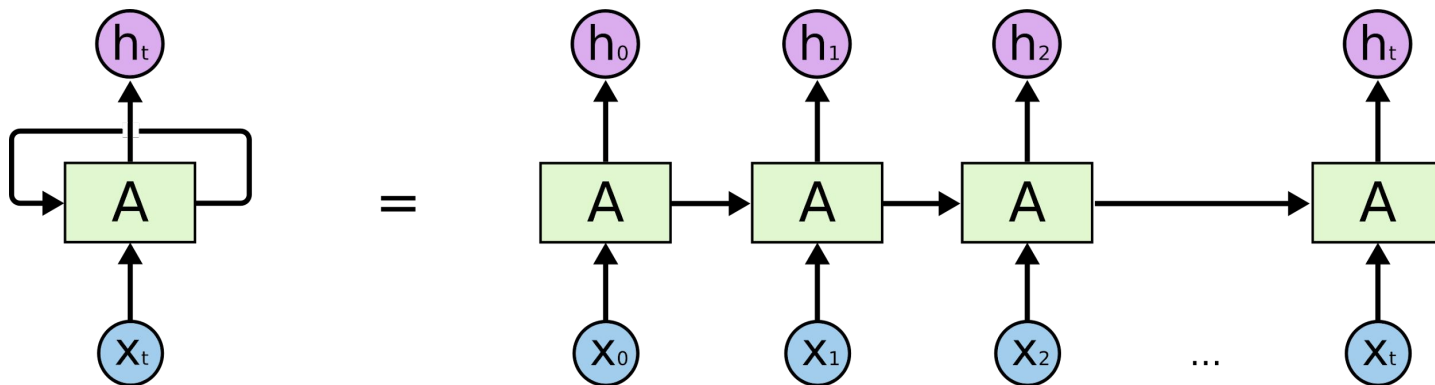
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## A History Lesson

# CNNs vs IMAGENET (over the years)



# RNN (Hinton et al, 1986)





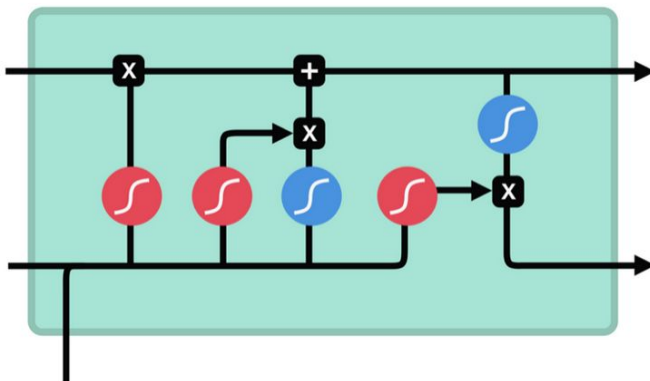
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# RNN

- Very deep layers
  - Vanishing and Exploding Gradients
  - Long Term Dependency issues
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# LSTM (Hochreiter & Schmidhuber, 1997)

<https://colah.github.io/posts/2015-08-Understanding-LSTMs/>



sigmoid



tanh



pointwise  
multiplication



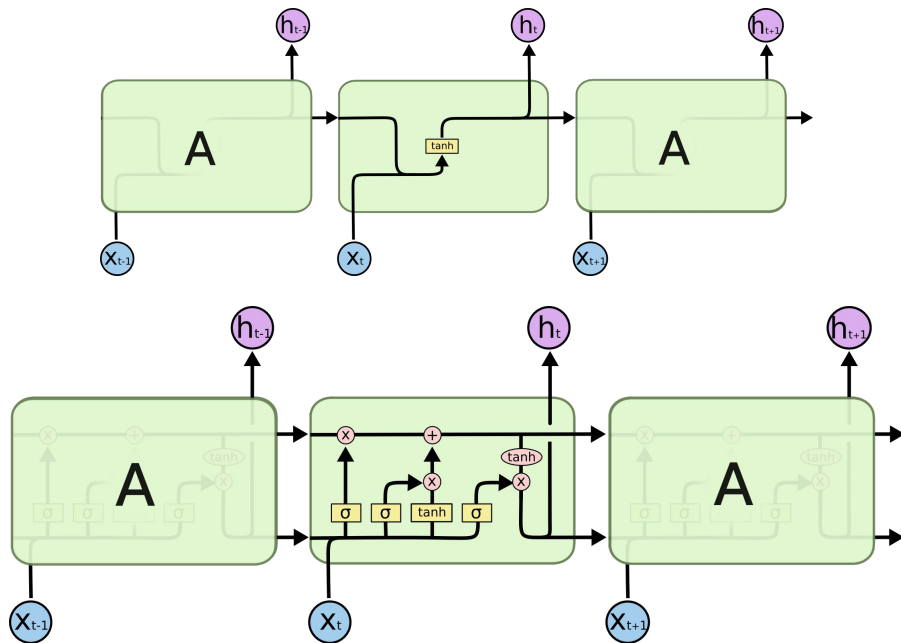
pointwise  
addition



vector  
concatenation

# LSTM

<https://colah.github.io/posts/2015-08-Understanding-LSTMs/>



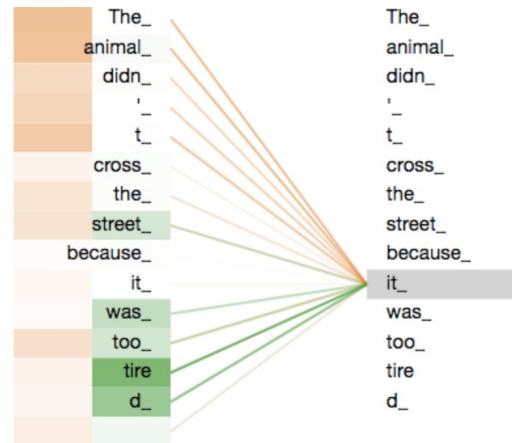
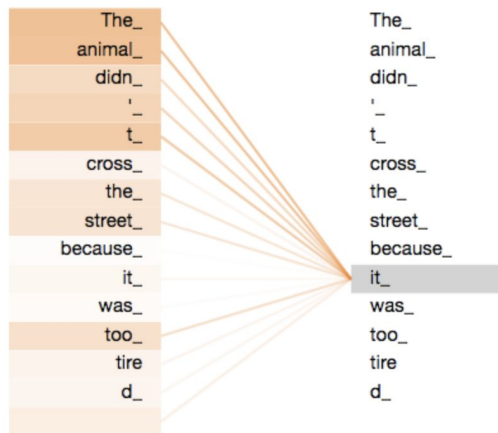
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# LSTM

- Solves vanishing gradients problem
  - More computationally expensive (slower)
  - Not parallelizable
  - Transfer Learning didn't really work on these
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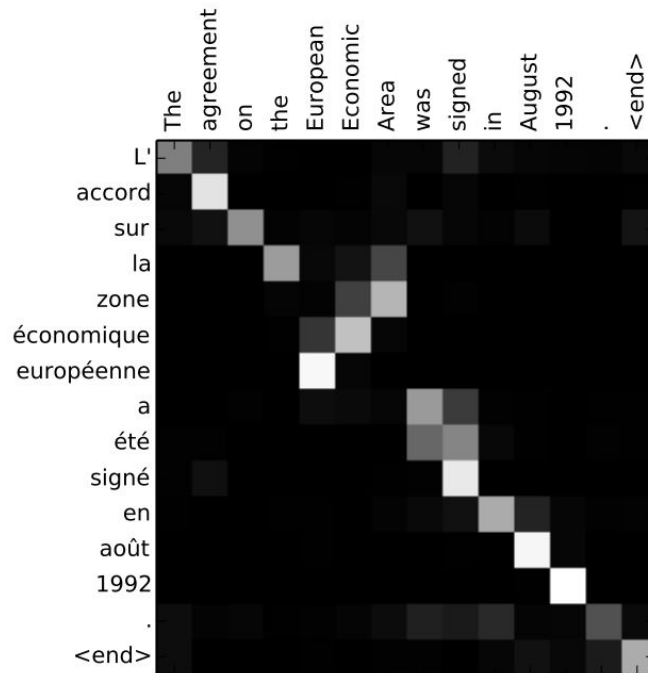
# Attention (Xu et al, 2015)

“The animal didn't cross the street because it was too tired”



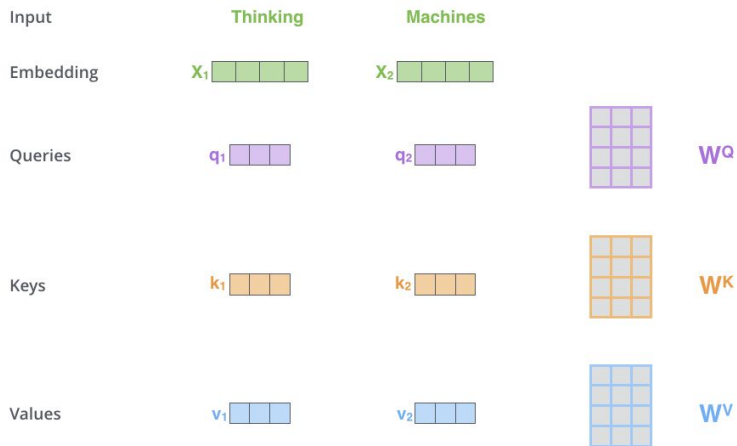
## A History Lesson

## Attention (in NMT)



## A History Lesson

# Attention



$$\text{Attention}(Q, K, V) = \text{softmax}\left(\frac{QK^T}{\sqrt{d_k}}\right)V$$

Input

Embedding

Queries

Keys

Values

Score

Divide by 8 (  $\sqrt{d_k}$  )

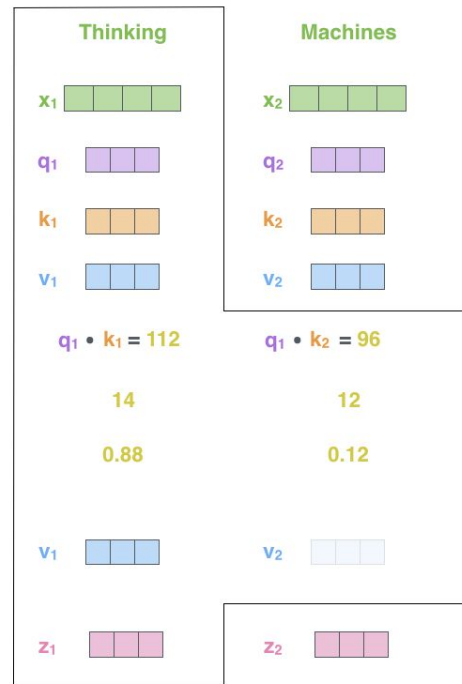
Softmax

Softmax

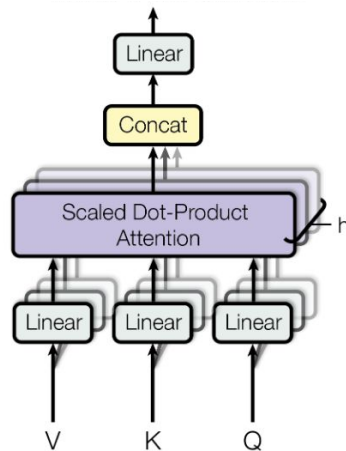
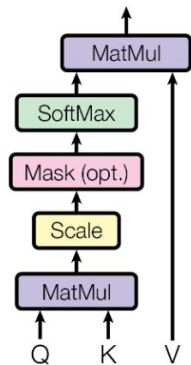
X

Value

Sum



# Attention



$$\text{Attention}(Q, K, V) = \text{softmax}\left(\frac{QK^T}{\sqrt{d_k}}\right)V$$



## A History Lesson

# Attention

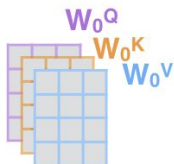
1) This is our input sentence\*

Thinking  
Machines

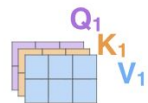
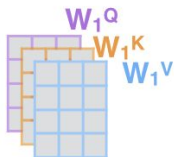
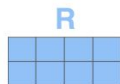
2) We embed each word\*



3) Split into 8 heads.  
We multiply  $X$  or  $R$  with weight matrices



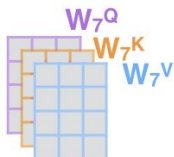
\* In all encoders other than #0, we don't need embedding. We start directly with the output of the encoder right below this one



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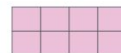
...



$W^O$



$Z$

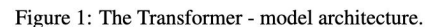


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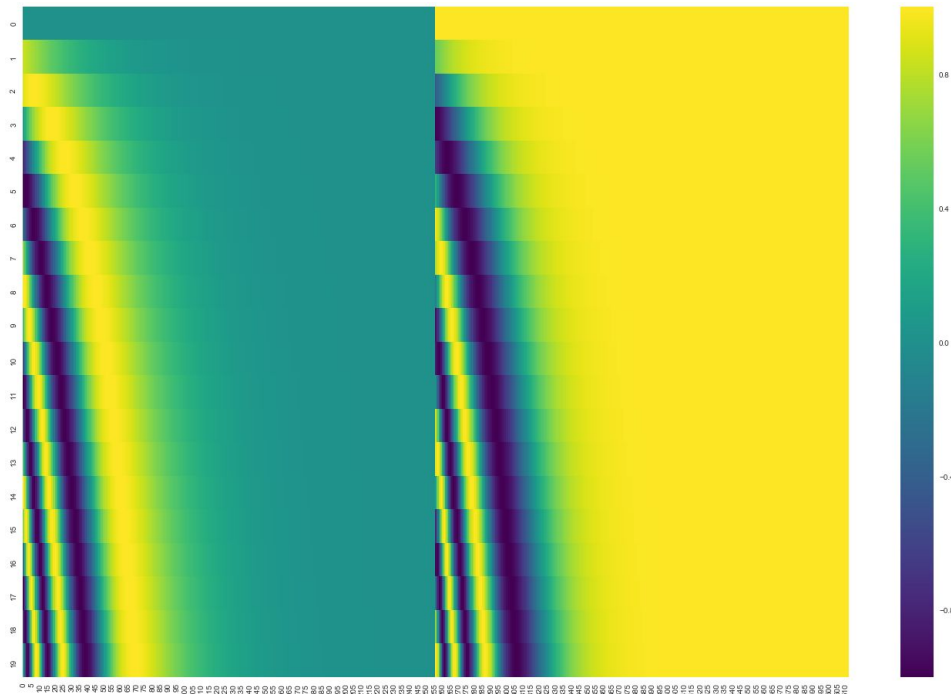
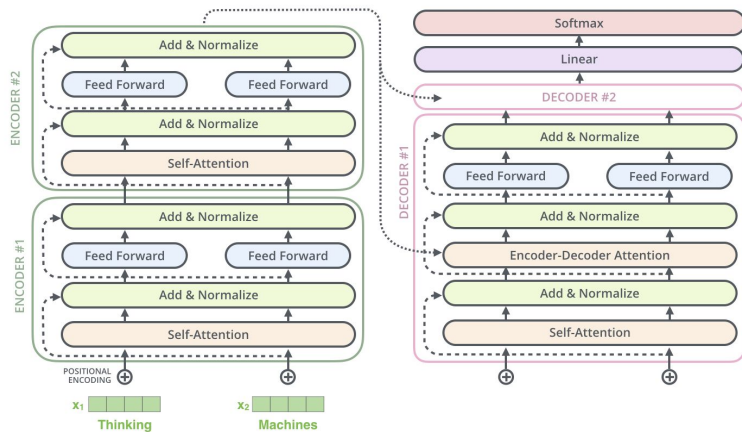
# Vision Transformer

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<http://nlp.seas.harvard.edu/2018/04/03/attention.html>



# Transformer

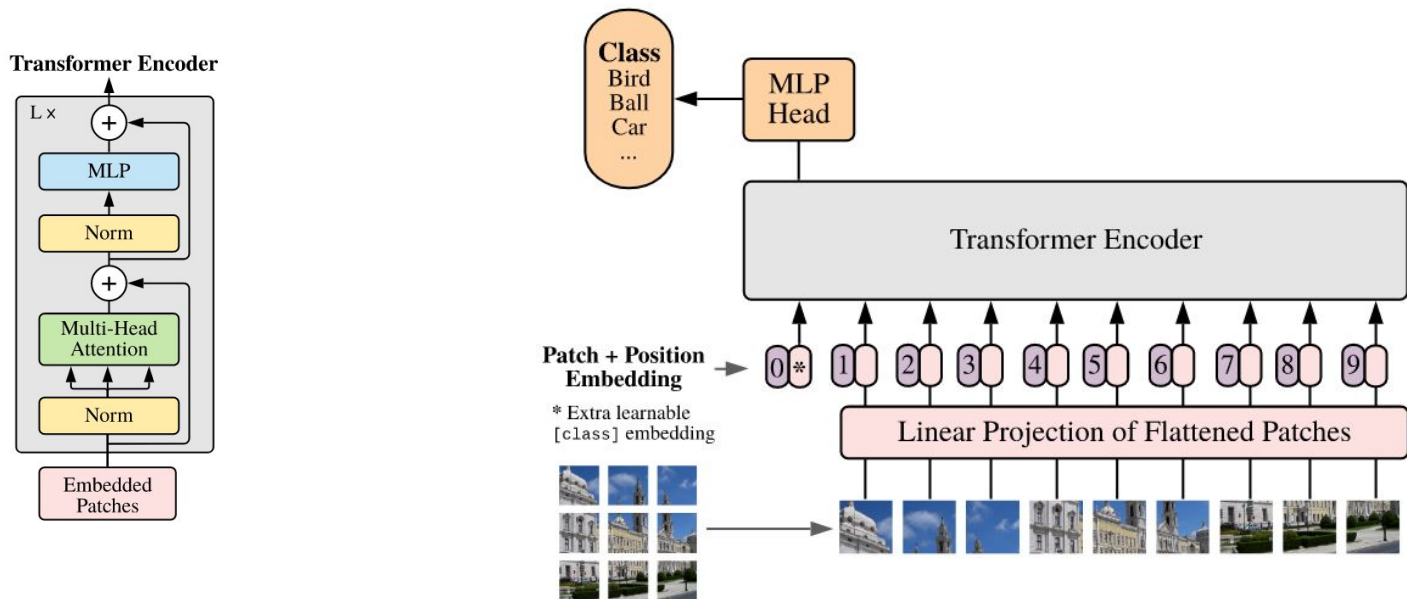


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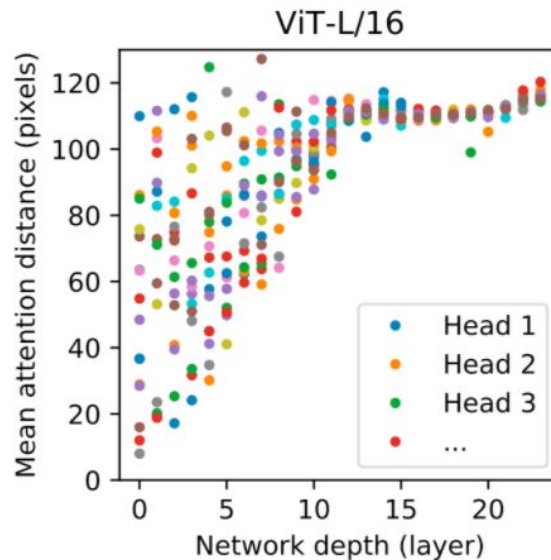
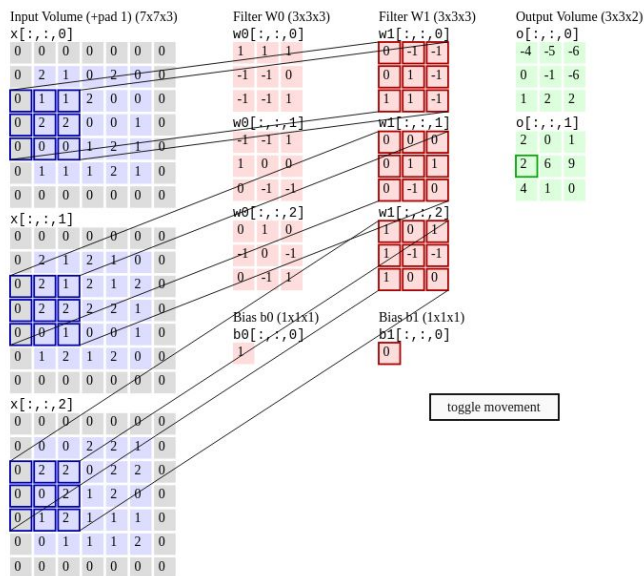
# Transformer

- Solves vanishing gradients problem
  - Parallelizable; hence faster, easier to train
  - Entire sequence at once (positional embeddings ftw)
  - Transfer Learning works!
  - Attention is  $O(N^2)$  🙄
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# Vision Transformer (Dosovitskiy et al, 2021)



# ViT vs CNNs





# Discussion

- So is this the end of CNNs?
- Green AI?
- Are Double Blind Reviews a joke?

fin.